



# Blue Coat Church of England Academy

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Principal: Mr D Smith

15<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

## Covid-19 Update

We continue to operate in very uncertain and challenging circumstances. As a school, we are endeavouring to maintain the full range of our curriculum and programme of extra curricular activities. If this is to be maintained moving forward we will need the full support of students and their families.

While we have maintained relatively low rates of positive cases of COVID-19 in school, the case rate across Walsall continues to rise and infections are most prevalent in the 10 – 19 age group. The high case rate locally along with relatively low rates of vaccination among this age group has resulted in additional measures being considered. It is with this in mind that Walsall Public Health have asked me to consider implementing additional control measures in school. The guidance outlines a range of measures which I have considered alongside the practicalities of maintaining the full range of our curriculum. I have therefore decided to reintroduce a range of strategies with effect from Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October, further measures may be required after half term. From Monday:

- All staff, visitors and all students will be required to wear a face covering in all communal areas unless exempt. This includes when moving between classrooms and when in the Dining Hall (except when eating and drinking).
- External visitors to school will be reduced as far as possible. Parents/carers are asked to contact the school by telephone or email whenever possible.
- Any visits out of school will be to COVID-secure premises only.

We will also continue to ensure that all staff and students sanitize their hands as they enter the building and regularly throughout the day, all rooms will be well ventilated and enhanced cleaning routines will be maintained.

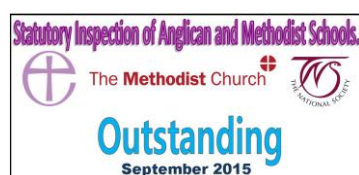
## Regular Testing & Vaccination

To avoid further measures being introduced, I would continue to ask for your support to ensure that your child is taking a lateral flow test twice a week. New test kits will be issued to students today – these are a new type of kit which only requires nasal swabs. Instructions for use are included inside each pack.

The vaccinations administered in school on Wednesday went very smoothly and the NHS were full of praise for the way students conducted themselves. Take up is however relatively low and I would ask that you give careful consideration to taking up the offer of a vaccine at the walk-in facility in the Saddlers Centre in Walsall Town Centre. Rates of vaccination are one of the key measures used by the Public Health team when considering when additional control measures are required.

Further information on vaccinations can be found on the school website:

<https://www.bluecoatacademy.org/parents-carers/covid-19-vaccinations>



### **Training Days & Dates**

**Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> October is a staff training day** and students are not required to attend school. Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October will therefore be the last day in school for students before half term. We will return to school at normal time on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021.

We will be trialling a new approach to one of the staff training days later this year. We plan to take the training day to coincide with Eid celebrations in May. We will not be able to confirm the exact timing until much closer to day itself but we expect that this training day will be taken during the week commencing 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022.

We also need to make a slight amendment to our dates for the current academic year to accommodate an additional Bank Holiday which has been announced to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. As the actual bank holiday coincides with our half term holiday, we will be looking to take the day at another time and will confirm when this will be taken after half term.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and a clear 'S'.

D. Smith  
Principal